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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/648,803	08/27/2003	Marco Musaragno	66309-0182	3939

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EXAMINER

SMALLEY, JAMES N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3727

DATE MAILED: 11/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/648,803

Applicant(s)

MUSARAGNO, MARCO

Examiner

James N. Smalley

Art Unit

3727

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 August 2005.
2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 8, 9, 11-15 and 17-21 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 20 and 21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☒ Claim(s) 19 is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 8, 9, 11-15, 17 and 18 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/8/05.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Due to the new grounds of rejection, this action is Non-Final.

Election/Restrictions

2. Newly submitted claims 20-21 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: The claims are drawn to a method of manufacturing a stopper of plural parts, classified in class 264, subclass 241, thus having a separate search classification than that of the originally presented embodiment.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits.

Accordingly, claims 20-21 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 11 discloses one of the suitable materials for the body as "synthetic material comprising at least one film of acrylic copolymer anchored to a support of a non woven fabric." To the best degree the Examiner understands the claimed invention, the construction is actually drawn to the membrane, which was separately claimed from the body in independent claim 9. It is unclear if this construction is an actual suitable material for forming the body. According to paragraph [0031] in the instant Specification, the only suitable material for forming the body is polyethylene with an added expansion agent.

Claim Objections

5. Claims 1 and 19 are objected to because of the following informalities: The claims contain the phrase, "a membrane provided with/having microholes located in the tube." As presented, the claims could be interpreted whereby the microholes are located in the tube. It is suggested the Applicant amend the claims, by providing a comma, so as to clearly define the holes being located in the membrane.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-6, 8-9, 11-15 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suter EP 629,559 in view of Ryder US 4,750,610.

Suter '559, in the embodiment of figure 5, teaches a synthetic cork, with a duct, and a tube located within the duct. The tube contains a filter, but it is not clear if the filter comprises microholes.

Ryder '610 teaches a hydrophobic filter (36) for a contact lens case, which is disposed within the duct of a synthetic tubular housing (34). In col. 4, line 37, the reference discloses the microholes have a diameter of 0.2 microns. In col. 4, lines 37-38, the reference teaches the filter is an acrylic copolymer anchored to a non-woven nylon fabric.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the filter of Suter '559, providing the membrane of Ryder '610 because the two are mechanical expedients equally capable of filtering air while preventing passage of liquid.

Regarding claims 5-6, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the body of any suitable material because it has been held to be within the

Art Unit: 3727

general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claim 19 is allowed.

Conclusion


9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: See attached PTO-892, citing relevant references.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James N. Smalley whose telephone number is (571) 272-4547. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9-6:30, Alternate Fri 9-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Newhouse can be reached on (571) 272-4544. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

jns


NATHAN J. NEWHOUSE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER